

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 7223

BILL NUMBER: HB 1343

DATE PREPARED: Jan 9, 2002

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: 211 Services.

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FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 X DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State

Summary of Legislation: This bill requires the Indiana Telephone Relay Access Corporation for the Hearing and Speech Impaired (InTRAC) to provide funding to a 211 service provider that: (1) is recognized by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC); and (2) provides telephone services that allow the use of the 211 dialing code to access a human services information and referral system. The bill allows a recognized 211 provider to request funding from InTRAC as needed periodically to continue providing 211 services. The bill requires InTRAC, upon receiving the request, to apply to the IURC for an increase in its monthly surcharge collected through local exchange companies. The bill provides that the amount of the surcharge adjustment requested must be sufficient to allow InTRAC to continue providing services that meet the requirements imposed on telephone companies by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Effective Date: Upon passage; July 1, 2002.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *IURC:* This bill could have a minimal impact on the IURC in so far as it would be required to designate approved 211 service providers and, if petitioned, hold additional hearings to adjust the telephone relay service surcharge authorized in IC 8-1-2.8-11. Any impact is expected to be covered using the IURC's existing staff and resources.

If the affected surcharge is increased, the bill will increase the state's phone service costs.

Background Information: InTRAC is a not-for-profit corporation established to provide phone accessibility to persons that are deaf or hard of hearing. The operational costs of InTRAC are shared by local exchange telephone companies and business and residential telephone users who pay a monthly surcharge on their telephone service (currently \$0.07). The telecommunications relay services (TRS) offered by InTRAC is required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates TRS interstate (long distance) calls, while InTRAC manages those calls made within the state. InTRAC provides 24-hour service to Indiana residents and processes over 1 million calls each year.

The FCC dedicated the “211” dialing combination for use in providing information and referral services to persons seeking social services. Approximately 20 states, including Indiana, are engaged in developing the service on a statewide level. As of May 2001, Connecticut was only state that offered a statewide 211 service. The provisions in this bill will provide a possible funding source for the implementation of a 211 program in Indiana.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: Local governmental entities would also be subject to any additional telephone surcharges.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission.

Local Agencies Affected:

Information Sources: Indiana Telephone Relay Access Corporation for the Hearing and Speech Impaired, www.RelayIndiana.com; Indiana 211 Partnership, www.in211.org; Pelletier, Erich, “211 State by State: Nationwide Implementation of the 211-Accessed Information and Referral Services”, Telecommunications and Information Policy Institute, Univ. of Texas, May 2001.